

On the family farm in Grant County, young Dr. Emily Kenner grew up with the mentality that she could achieve whatever she was willing to work for. She understood that with “grit, determination, and a lot of hard work, [she] could do anything.” It was this hard work that made her a state championship marching band member, a participant in the prestigious Governor’s Scholar Program (GSP), and now a nationally recognized Nephrologist who assists patients with all forms of kidney dysfunction.

Emily is a 2000 graduate of Grant County High School and remembers her time within the halls of GCHS well. As a member of the National Honor Society, 4H, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Healthcare Explorers, band, and cheerleading, she was extremely involved during her high school career. It was during her time at GSP that she realized medicine was an option for her future. A local physician and father of her close friend, Dr. Sterneberg, first allowed Emily to shadow in his office as a senior in high school. From that experience, her interest grew.

Upon graduation from GCHS in 2000, Dr. Kenner enrolled at the University of Louisville and in 2004 earned her Bachelor of Arts in Biology. From 2004 to 2008 she attended the University of Louisville School of Medicine. She completed the University of Louisville Internal Medicine Residency Program in 2011 and then went on to receive her subspecialty American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) board certification in Nephrology in August of 2013 after attending the University of Cincinnati for Fellowship in Nephrology.

Today, Dr. Kenner is a practicing nephrologist, who serves as Vice President and member of the Board of Directors with the Kidney and Hypertension Center. She also serves as the Medical Director for Davita Dialysis in Williamstown, Kentucky, and for Davita Home Dialysis in Walton, Kentucky. Dr. Kenner has received the Top Doc Cincinnati/NKY award for the last 5 years in a row, 2017-2021. This year, 2022, she received the National award, Davita Service Excellence Core Value Award, in Denver, Colorado. During her young career, she has amassed tremendous honor. Dr. Kenner states, “By receiving an award, it demonstrates to me that the work I’ve done meant something to someone. That is where the honor is.”

Behind every successful person is a trail of failed attempts and hardships and Dr. Kenner is no stranger to these. She shares, “Medical school was hard. I mean very hard! I had to work continuously. I could not take a night off from studying to go to a movie or out to dinner. If I went anywhere, my backpack came with me, full of whatever materials I needed to study.” It was also during this time that she lived solely on student loans. “I did not have resources for anything beyond what I absolutely needed.” Now, she looks back at these times and is grateful for the difficulties. “I endured and overcame all of these hardships because I had a goal and I was willing to make the necessary sacrifices.” These struggles became a part of her achievements.

Through these sacrifices, she is now blessed to have a young family. She and her husband, Jared, have three children, Regan, Riley, and Timothy. Their sacrificial support has allowed her the ability to serve out her purpose. Her immediate family, including her parents and four sisters, continue to reside in Grant County as well. Dr. Kenner shares, “Behind every successful person is a team of giants upon whose shoulders success is to be realized; my family has been those giants.”

Looking toward the future, Dr. Emily Kenner hopes, “to continue to provide subspecialty nephrology care to her hometown. I want to bring general health awareness and wellness opportunities to the community. I want to have the opportunity to mentor young people in our community. I want my kids to grow up here and learn important values from a community who cares. I want people to know that real success is obtainable right here in Grant County.”

Dr. Kenner notes that she is not finished with her education. Throughout her journey, her faith has played a primary role in her life. She is currently finishing her thesis at Liberty University, School of Divinity to complete a Master’s degree in Christian Apologetics. Dr. Kenner reminisces about a quote her band director would say, “Shoot for the moon, and if you hit the stars that is okay too.” She now understands the meaning of this statement, “Progress is progress no matter how small. Make sure your dreams are big enough to make your efforts worth your time.”